



JEFF SOMERS

**THE
BOUNCER**
a novel

The Bouncer

25.

Dimly, I was aware of a gunshot. Too far back to be in the kitchen, so it was Lisa. I didn't think she'd ever fired her weapon outside of a range before.

Patsy was bigger than I remembered. Which was fucking disturbing, since I remembered him pretty big. He shouldered his way through the ruined door and looked around at us with a lack of expression on his flabby, round face. Patsy didn't seem particularly pleased to be beating the shit out of a group of people on a cold, damp evening. He didn't seem *displeased*, either. Patsy struck me as the sort of guy who lived in the Moment quite a bit.

Jill raised the Glock, and Patsy casually knocked it aside. It went off, sending a slug into a cabinet as Jill was sent rocketing into the stove with bone-crunching force.

"Big man!" Ivan shouted. Patsy turned to stare down at the smaller, older man, and Ivan settled into a boxer's crouch, hands up, feet light. He danced for a second or two, then sent a combination into Patsy's face—left right, solid jabs.

Patsy flinched back, his wide, crooked nose blossoming into red pain. Ivan pressed his advantage, feinting at a third jab and then landing a solid blow into the bigger man's side, approximately where a kidney would be on a mortal man.

Patsy reared back with a flicker of annoyance on his face and smacked Ivan in the head, staggering him. I put the automatic up and crouched down, squeezing the trigger. The shot went wide, and Patsy oriented on me, bloody nostrils flaring like a predator who'd caught the scent.

He charged, tossing the table aside like it was made of balsa wood. Something flatlined in my head, and I squeezed off four shots in a blind panic.

And then my whole world became Patsy, and the curious, sweaty smell of him.